

SOCIAL HOST LIABILITY

“The kids are going to drink anyway, so why don’t we provide a place in our home for them where they can be supervised?”

Good intentions aside, this approach may subject both parent and child to criminal penalties and civil liability.

If teenage alcohol consumption has taken place at a supervised party, and the teenagers have left the home, the “social host’s” responsibility does not end.

Providing alcohol to a minor is a CRIME, and it comes with the penalty of IMPRISONMENT for 6 months and a FINE of \$2,000.

The under-aged drinker may also be punished with a fine of \$3,000.

While parents who adopt this approach think that they will be able to supervise a teenage party with alcohol, they cannot predict situations that may develop if a minor has been drinking in their home.

BE AWARE:

Parents could be civilly liable as a “social host,” if they give permission for their teenage child to drink in someone else’s home, and he/she injures or kills a third party.

SOCIAL HOST LIABILITY



Office of Plymouth County
District Attorney

Timothy J. Cruz

**32 Belmont Street
P.O. Box 1665
Brockton, MA 02303**

**Phone: 508-584-8120
Fax: 508-586-3578
www.mass.gov/da/plymouth**

SOCIAL HOST LIABILITY

Teenagers
and
Alcohol



**Timothy J. Cruz
Plymouth County
District Attorney**

**32 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301**

**Tel: 508-584-8120
Fax: 508-586-3578
Web: www.mass.gov/da/plymouth**

A Message from the District Attorney



Teenage children who mix alcohol and driving, die tragically every year.

As parents and guardians, we must take a proactive approach, and set a good example for our children.

It is our responsibility to educate our children about the dangers of underage drinking.

We must also address the consequences of making a poor decision, such as, drinking and driving.

I urge you to take a moment, with your child, and review this brochure, it could save theirs or someone else's life.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney
Plymouth County

IT'S THE LAW

**Person under 21 years of age purchases/attempts purchase/makes arrangements for another to purchase/uses fake I.D. to purchase alcoholic beverages for self or another.*

Fine: License suspended for 180 days, \$300.00 fine.

**Minor in possession/transport/carries alcoholic beverages.*

Fine: Maximum \$50 fine, first offense; \$150 fine second and subsequent offense, license suspended 90 days.

**Contributing to the delinquency of minor.*

Fine: Maximum 1 year prison, \$500 fine; or both.

**Sale, delivery, furnishing alcohol to person under 21 years old.*

Fine: Maximum 6 months prison, maximum \$2000 fine; or both.

**Operating Under the Influence of Alcohol. (OUI)*

Fine: Penalties range from first offense/alcohol program and license suspension to subsequent offenses/imprisonment and license suspension:

-Under 18 years of age refusal breathalyzer or reading of .02 or greater, results in 1 year driver's license suspension.

-Age 18-21 Refusal breathalyzer or reading .02 or greater, results in license suspension 180 days.

**OUI serious bodily injury.*

Fine: Max. prison term, 10 yrs., Max. fine \$5,000.

**OUI motor vehicle homicide.*

Fine: Maximum prison term 15 years; maximum fine \$5,000; license suspension 10 years first offense, subsequent offense license suspended for life.

**Manslaughter if conduct created high degree of likelihood that substantial harm would result to victim.*

Fine: Maximum prison term 20 years, maximum fine \$1,000.

STATISTICS

- 2.6 million teenagers do not know that a person can die from an alcohol overdose. (CSAP, 1996)
- During a typical weekend, an average of one teenager dies each hour in a car crash. Nearly fifty percent of those crashes involved alcohol. (NHTSA, 1999)
- Eight young people a day die in alcohol-related crashes. (CSAP, 1996)
- More than 35% of all 16-to-20 year-old deaths result from motor vehicle crashes. 37% were alcohol-related crashes. (NCHS, 1997)